

Spring 1-15-1999

ENG 3009C-010: Myth and Culture

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Recommended Citation

Bazargan, Susan, "ENG 3009C-010: Myth and Culture" (1999). *Spring 1999*. 95.
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3009C-010 ✓


English 3009C-010 Myth and Culture

Spring semester 1999

Dr. Susan Bazargan

TTH 12:30-1:45 CH 303

Office: CH323 Phone: Office: 581-6979 Home (Champaign): 355-5784

Office Hours: TTH 10:45-12:30 and by appointment

E-mail: cfsxb@eiu.edu

Course requirements:

I. Class attendance:

I have a strict attendance policy. If you have more than two unexcused absences during the semester, your grade for the semester will lose one-half point for each unexcused absence. If you are ill or have to leave campus because of a family emergency, please call my office or home and let me know.

II. Papers:

You will write two papers, the first 3 pages long, the second 4-5 pages long (typed, double-spaced). Topics will be assigned later.

III. Exams and Quizzes:

The midterm exam will be held on 3/4; the date of the final will be announced later. Pop quizzes will be given occasionally. Quizzes cannot be made up.

IV. Class participation and presentation:

Participation in class discussions is required. You'll do one oral presentation during the semester as part of a group project.

Grading Policy: Short paper: 10%; Long essay: 15%; Midterm: 20%; Quizzes: 10%; Final: 20%; Class participation: 15%; Class presentation: 10%

D-: 60-64, D: 65-67, D+: 68-69; C-: 70-74, C: 75-77, C+: 78-79, B-: 80-84, B: 85-87, B+: 88-89, A-: 90-94, A: 95-97, A+: 98-100.

Conferences:

Please stop by my office to discuss any problem or question related to the course. You can also make an appointment if my regular office hours are inconvenient for you.

Other policies:

1. The English Department's policy on plagiarism states that "Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism--the appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's original work" (Random House Dictionary of the English Language) has the right and responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office."

2. If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

Required Texts:

Achebe, Things Fall Apart

Coomaraswamy, Myths of the Hindus and Buddhists

Du Bois, Souls of Black Folk

Dundes, Sacred Narrative

Erdoes and Ortiz, American Indian Myths and Legends

Harris and Platzner, Classical Mythology

Hesse, Siddhartha

Kovacs, The Epic of Gilgamesh

Neihardt, Black Elk Speaks

Rinpoche, The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying

Scheub, The African Storyteller

Willis, World Mythology

Class Meetings:

I. Myth and Culture: Some Definitions

1/12: Introduction to the course. Definitions of Myth and Culture

1/14: Willis, pp. 10-16; "Slippery Words: Myth" in Dundes; "The Problem of Defining Myth" in Dundes

II: Africa:

1/19: Willis, "Egypt" pp. 36-43; "Isis and Osiris" in Scheub, pp. 67-71; Video: "The Egyptian Pyramids"

1/21: "The Two Brothers" in Scheub, pp. 363-371; Willis, "Africa": pp. 264- 269, 274-277; All in Scheub: "The Blue Crane"; "The Weight before the Door"; "Notes on Myth" (pp. 50-52)

1/26: All in Scheub: "The Creation"; "God Creates Man and Woman"; "Notes on the Trickster" (pp. 116-119); "Two Tar Baby Stories" (pp. 151-157)

1/28: All in Scheub: "The Magic Drum"; "Notes on the Hero" (pp. 198-201); "Sikhuluma, The Boy Who Did Not Speak"; "The Girl with One Hand"

III: The Middle East

2/2: Willis, "The Middle East" pp. 56-63, 67; "The Enuma Elish" (hand-out); Kovacs, The Epic of Gilgamesh (Read the Introductory material)

2/4: The Concept of the Hero: The Epic of Gilgamesh (continued)

2/9: The Epic of Gilgamesh

IV: Greece and Rome

2/11: All pages are from Harris and Platzner: 3-46; 54-61

(Recommended reading: "The Cultural-Historical Background of Myths on the Separation of Sky and Earth" in Dundes)

2/16: Harris and Platzner: "The Great Goddess and Goddesses" pp. 84-116

2/18: Harris and Platzner: "The Quest of Odysseus" pp. 342-369

2/23: Harris and Platzner: The Odyssey (continued) pp. 369-381

V: India

2/25: **First paper is due**

Willis: "India" pp. 68-69; 72-81

Myths of Hinduism: Coomaraswamy, The Mahabharata, 118-216

3/2: The Mahabharata (continued)

3/4: **Midterm exam**

3/9: Willis, "Myths of Buddhism" pp. 86-87; Coomaraswamy, Chapter V, Buddha 245-250, 259-276

Hesse, Siddhartha

3/11: Hesse (continued)

Spring Break

3/23: Rinpoche, The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying (Chapters One, Two, Four)

3/25: Rinpoche (Chapters Five, Six, Seven, Eight)

VI: North America

3/30: Willis, pp. 220-233.

From Erdoes and Ortiz: Student selections and presentations (**Groups I and II**)

4/1: From Erdoes and Ortiz: Student selections and presentations (**Groups III and IV**)

Recommended reading:

"An Ideological Dichotomy: Myths and Folk Beliefs Among the Shoshoni"; "The Creation Myths of the North American Indians" (both in Dundes)

VII: Myth and Culture: Loss and Recovery in the Modern World

4/6: Africa: Achebe, Things Fall Apart (Chapter 1-13)

4/8: Achebe (Chapters 14-25)

4/13: Niehardt, Black Elk Speaks

4/15: Niehardt (continued);

4/20: "The Spirit of Crazy Horse" (video)

4/22: Du Bois, The Souls of Black Folk pp. 1-24, 34-61

4/27: Du Bois, 73-81, 90-102, 117-132

4/29: Du Bois, 133-163, 185-194

Second paper is due